



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

D.T.E. 06-8

April 7, 2006

Investigation by the Department of Telecommunications and Energy on its own Motion to Establish Retail Billing and Termination Practices for Telecommunications Carriers.

On April 7, 2006, the Department of Telecommunications and Energy ("Department") issued an Order opening a Notice of Inquiry ("NOI") to establish Retail Billing and Termination Practices ("Practices") for telecommunications carriers operating in the Commonwealth, originally established in New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, D.P.U. 18448 (1977), and to develop and implement updated billing and termination practices to be observed by all telecommunications carriers offering retail service in Massachusetts.

The Department will review the Practices and will amend their customer protection provisions to match the current competitive marketplace. The Department seeks to update and clarify all provisions of these Practices, develop additional provisions or delete existing provisions, as appropriate, to represent changes in the telecommunications marketplace, and apply the Practices to all carriers offering local residential telecommunications service in Massachusetts. In addition, the Department will evaluate whether the consumer protections afforded by the Practices should be applied to telecommunications services and providers not covered under the current Practices (e.g., in-state long distance service, pre-paid services, and service to small business customers (i.e., those with three lines or less) as well as to residential customers). The Department will consider whether it should require minimum consumer protections for voice service in Massachusetts, regardless of how that service is delivered, and to what extent the Department should expand the updated Practices to apply to emerging/alternative technologies (e.g., Voice over Internet Protocol, wireless). The policies, methods and procedures developed in this proceeding will be utilized to review and approve all retail billing and termination plans.

The Department will accept initial written comments on the issues and questions identified in this Order no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 6, 2006, and no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 10, 2006 for reply comments. Based on the comments received, the Department may establish a further procedural schedule to allow for additional questions and provide for

technical sessions and/or hearings. The Department expects to distribute draft Practices for further comment.

Whenever possible, comments should clearly indicate to which issue(s) and question(s) they are responsive. All comments exceeding 20 pages in length must be accompanied by an executive summary. All written comments also should be submitted to the Department in electronic format using one of the following methods: (1) by e-mail attachment to dte.efiling@state.ma.us and andrea.saia@state.ma.us, or (2) on a 3.5" disk. The text of the e-mail or the disk label must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.T.E. 06-8), (2) name of the person or company submitting the filing, and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The electronic filing also should include the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of a question about the filing. Text responses should be created in either Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or an Adobe-compatible PDF file. Data or spreadsheet responses should be compatible with Microsoft Excel. All comments submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's Web site: <http://www.mass.gov/dte/>. Current Practices, D.P.U. 18448, may be viewed on the Department's Web site at: <http://www.mass.gov/dte/telecom/18448.pdf>.

One original and five copies of all comments should be filed with **Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary, RE: D.T.E. 06-8, Department of Telecommunications and Energy, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02110.**

A copy of the Order opening this investigation and Notice of Inquiry will be mailed to all telecommunications carriers offering service in Massachusetts. In addition, a copy of the Order will be available for public viewing during normal business hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at the offices of the Department, One South Station, 2nd Floor, Boston, Massachusetts, and will be posted on our website, <http://www.mass.gov/dte/>.

By Order of the Department,

/s/
Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary